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Effendi-Agriculture

ONE VILLAGE ONE INDUSTRY PROJECT BEGINS IN KEDAH BY YEAR END

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 1 (Bernama) -- The "one village one industry" project will be launched in Kedah at the end of the year on a joint-venture basis between the Agriculture Ministry and Rural Development Ministry, said Agriculture Minister Datuk Mohd Effendi Norwawi today.

He said the project was in the final stage of study to determine the project and village involved, and the Kedah project would become a model for other states.

Mohd Effendi disclosed this after the simultaneous opening of the MAHA 2002 (Malaysian Agriculture, Horticulture and Agro-tourism Show), the National Farmers, Breeders and Fishermen Day and Agritech Malaysia 2002, by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Mines Exhibition and Conference Centre, near here today. The six-day exhibition ends on Sunday.

The ministry had identified 10 types of viable food industry projects which could be developed in villages in the state as downstream projects using agricultural products in the areas concerned.

This way, the activities of farmers, breeders and fishermen could not only be diversified but their spare time could also be filled with activities that could increase their income and create job opportunities for their children, he said.

The industrial project would be developed on a cooperative basis involving local farmers associations while the government would assist in funding it, he said.

He said the project would emphasise on quality production and suitable brand name to penetrate not only the local market but also international markets more effectively.

It was hoped that the project could encourage farmers, breeders and fishermen to always endeavour to add value to their agricultural products by improving their commercial value, Mohd Effendi said.

He also said that government efforts to encourage farmers, breeders and fishermen to use technology in their agricultural activities were producing results with the number of people involved reaching thousands.

In fact, applications for government loans under the private company incentive scheme from 2001 until June this year had exceeded RM5 billion with the biggest application for fishery projects followed by animal husbandry and agriculture, he said.

He said the new challenge for the Agriculture Ministry now was to ensure that the development of the agricultural sector did not bring adverse effects to the environment.

-- BERNAMA

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